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Marion H. King

WHAT WOMEN DID FOR THE WAR, AND WHAT THE WAR DID FOR WOMEN.

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A MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS, DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOLDIERS' CLUB AT WELLESLEY, MASS., MAY 30, 1894,

BY

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BOSTON, 1894.

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"If all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of woman was applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during this war." — LINCOLN.

Mr. Chairman, and Ladies and Gentlemen:

Memorial Day, popularly known as Decoration Day, was established by the Grand Army of the Republic, the first post of which was organized on the sixth day of April, 1866, at Decatur, Ill.

May 5, 1868, a general order was issued by John A. Logan, Commander-in-chief of the Grand Army, designating the thirtieth day of May "for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defence of their country during the late rebellion." No particular form of ceremony was prescribed, but posts and comrades were left to arrange in their own way such fitting services as circumstances might permit.

On that day, without legislative sanction or executive proclamation, the Grand Army posts and the people in twenty-seven States responded to this call with such services and tributes of respect that Congress caused the proceedings to be collected and published in a volume. The following year the demonstrations were still more extensive, and the reports of them were also published by order of Congress. The day has since been made a legal holiday in thirty-two States and Territories.

The custom of decorating the graves of those who fell in the civil war was first adopted in the Southern States before the date of this order. It is really a custom which came down from the early Christian Church, and is still observed on All Souls' Day by both Protestants and Cath-

olics in Germany. It has been said that the suggestion that the Grand Army establish such an observance in memory of the Union dead was made by a private soldier who was a native of Germany; but I think the order of General Logan was issued at the solicitation of Mrs. Martha J. Kimball, who recently died at Philadelphia, and who was one of the most efficient and devoted of the many Northern women who engaged in the hospital service of the Union Army during the war.

She had observed, while travelling in the South, how the graves of the Confederate soldiers were decorated by the Southern women; and, being pained at the lack of similar tokens of respect in the North, earnestly brought the matter to the attention of General Logan, with the result that the 30th of May was established as a "Memorial Day." The time is appropriate for its ceremonies. Flowers bloom on every hand, and even in the extreme North —

> "The verdure of the meadow lands
> Is creeping to the hills."

While the events of the war were recent, and the ceremonies of Memorial Day participated in by those who took part in or remembered the war, the exercises naturally partook more of the character of purely memorial services than they can continue to do now that only a comparatively small portion of the people have any definite recollection of the events which they commemorate.

It is three and thirty years since the war began. The average age of those who took an active part in it was less than the time that has since elapsed. With perhaps a very few rare exceptions, those who took part in the war are now beyond the age for military duty, and if a new army were now to be raised it would necessarily be composed mainly of men who have been born since that time. Most of those who vote have come to manhood since the war.

The government is in the hands of a new generation

The smoke-stained banners beneath which our soldiers fought, and whose tattered folds are more beautiful than their stars, have long been furled in shrines of patriotic devotion, and to a large majority of the people of to-day the events of the civil war are only history, as far removed from their personal recollections as the events of the revolution.

It is not to be expected, therefore, that the people can retain their keen personal interest in the observance of this day as a mere memorial of those who fell in the war.

It has, however, become so firmly established as an annual holiday that if its observance is properly guided I think it may long remain a most efficient influence in the cultivation of patriotic sentiments and love of country. To accomplish this the exercises of the day should be directed not merely to keeping alive the memory of that which is past, but also to the education of the popular mind with regard to the things which are present with us.

I have therefore thought it not inappropriate to the day to say something of the part which women took in the war, and of what I think it did for them.

The story of the war has, almost without exception, been written and told as the story of the actions of men alone.

Countless addresses and publications have made the military side of the war familiar to us all. We know how the North, with only sixteen thousand troops scattered from Maine to California, and only one naval vessel in condition for service, in less than eighteen months created a navy of more than six hundred vessels and an army of nearly a million of men.

We know that in four years nearly three millions (2,688,-523) of soldiers were brought into the field, who participated in more than two thousand engagements, and of whom nearly three hundred thousand (271,000) died in the service.

We know that the great battles of the war exceeded in number of those engaged, and in the number of those who fell, any of the great battles of the world.

We know that one in five of the male population of the North were in military service, and that at the close of the war there were more than a million of men in arms in support of the government.

The story of the campaigns and the battles, of the sufferings and of the victories of the Union army, have become as household words, to be remembered and repeated with increasing admiration as the years go by.

We know the civil history of our country during the war, the history of her Congress and her Executive, —

> "How statesmen at her council met
> Who knew the seasons when to take
> Occasion by the hand and make
> The bounds of freedom wider yet."

We know how Stanton, the great War Secretary, dominant and despotic, ever stood a tower of strength, "four-square to all the winds that blew;" how Chase, like Hamliton, again "smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth;" how Seward held our foreign relations within the technical rules of international law, and Adams maintained a wise and politic course at the Court of St. James, while Beecher taught the common people of England that our contest was a struggle for freedom, and by them and through them at last forced an English administration, hostile to our cause to the very core, into a reluctant and doubtful neutrality.

We know how Lincoln, the most sagacious statesman whom the republic has yet produced, temporized with the contending factions of the North, and wisely watched and waited until the people painfully and by slow degrees came to know that if the republic was to live, slavery must die, and were finally ready to write "EMANCIPATION"

on the folds of the flag, and follow it with unflinching devotion from battle to battle till it was planted in serene majesty on the shore of the Gulf.

We know also the marvellous material progress of the country since the war, — how its population has increased from thirty-five millions to sixty-eight millions, its wealth from sixteen billions of dollars to more than sixty-six billions, its railroads from thirty-four thousand miles to more than one hundred and seventy-five thousand: how it has come to be bound together by more than a million of miles of telegraph and telephone lines, and how its commerce upon the sea and upon the land has quadrupled and quadrupled again.

We know how year by year the love of the Union has grown in the South as well as in the North, till nearly seventy millions of people yield willing allegiance to a flag from which even Southern valor could not pluck a single star.

But we do not know so well how much the women did in the great struggle for the Union, and what it did for them.

To fully understand what the war did for women, we must consider their situation when the war began. This is, I think, not fully understood.

We do not quite understand now that, prior to the war, the occupation of women was mainly confined to domestic affairs, and to a limited participation in the work of education. The professions and most gainful pursuits were practically closed to them. They were regarded as incapable of participating to any extent in business matters. They did not themselves understand their own capabilities.

From the time when Abigail Adams, a clergyman's daughter in Massachusetts, was regarded as educated without having been sent to any school, and when, as she says, "female education in the best families went no fur-

ther than writing and arithmetic, and, in some rare instances, music and dancing," to the time immediately preceding the war, the education of women had made slow progress.

It was one hundred and fifty-three years after Harvard College was founded before any provision was made by Massachusetts for the education of girls; and public schools were established in Boston for boys one hundred and thirty-five years before girls were admitted to "learn reading and writing for a part of the year."

When Mrs. Willard in 1821 submitted to the New York Legislature the first plan for the higher education of girls ever proposed in the United States, she was careful to state that she wished to produce no "college-bred females," and that there were to be no "exhibitions" in her school, since "public speaking forms no part of *female* education."

As late as 1834, when Mary Lyon requested the Massachusetts Legislature for slight state aid for a school for women, she was met with great opposition; and a learned Doctor of Divinity, after arguing that the education of women had not been successful, said, "You see how this method has utterly failed. Let this page of Divine Providence be attentively considered in relation to this matter."

It was not until 1837 that Mount Holyoke Seminary was opened, and it was ten years before Latin was a regular study in its course, and forty years before the French language became a regular study in that school.

The brother of Lucy Stone entered a New England college where she, being a woman, was refused admittance, and in 1843 was compelled to journey to then far-off Oberlin, the only college which admitted women. And even there, when she graduated at the head of her class, she was given the honor of a commencement essay only on condition that it should be read by a man, as it was not considered proper for a young woman to appear upon the platform; a condition which she properly refused to accept.

As late as 1866 the inauguration of Miss Johnston as principal of the State Normal School at Framingham was regarded as a doubtful experiment.

Medical schools were practically closed to women at the time of the war. In 1845, Elizabeth Blackwell applied to twelve medical schools in succession for admission, only to be excluded, until received at a small school in Geneva, New York, by vote of the students. The schools which admitted them were not of the higher grade, and in 1860 it was estimated that only about three hundred women in the United States had managed to "graduate somewhere in medicine."

Graduation, however, did not procure recognition in the profession. Most of the medical societies refused to permit consultations with women as physicians, and at the beginning of the war women were practically excluded from the practice of medicine to any substantial extent.

Harvard, and most of the other colleges, although founded and sustained by funds to which women, as well as men, had contributed, still kept up the sign, "Private way, dangerous passing."

Women were practically excluded from all business vocations. Their employment in professional or business offices was unknown, and it was regarded as improper if not impossible for a woman to become a stenographer or a telegraph operator, or even to keep a country post-office. It was very rare that one was employed in any clerical occupation even in the departments at Washington, or in the departments of any State government. Gainful pursuits in which they believed themselves to be competent were closed to them. They asked in vain for an *opportunity* to compete with men in these occupations on fair terms, or on any terms.

The war forced a condition of affairs which gave this opportunity to them. Young men left the shops, the offices,

and the stores by tens of thousands, clerks in banks and counting-rooms, and in all the departments of the National and State governments, went into the army. Nearly thirty thousand teachers entered the service.

It is safe to say that during the four years of the war more than half a million men were withdrawn from occupations which could be followed by women, and the very necessities of production to provide for the war itself increased the demand for service in all these occupations.

The places thus made vacant were necessarily filled, and the increased demand thus created necessaily supplied, largely by women.

It was thus that war, "the father of all things," brought to women an opportunity to compete with men in occupations which they could follow.

The shop-keeper found that the young woman could sell goods and keep books as well as the young man.

The school-district committee found that the young woman could keep school even in the winter term as well as or better than the young man.

The telegraph company found that young women could receive and send telegrams as accurately and rapidly as young men, and by degrees it was discovered that the women could master the mysteries of stenography and the intricacies of business as well as men.

It is true this change came slowly, and only as it was forced by necessity, but it came surely, and it came to stay.

The close of the war found thousands of women in every State performing thoroughly and well the duties of occupations which before the war it was thought impossible for them to follow.

The wonderful material development of the country which followed the war, and was largely caused by it, still further increased the demand for the services of women in gainful pursuits.

And thus the war opened the way to that improvement in the material and intellectual condition of woman which is the most marked characteristic of our social growth during the last quarter of a century.

But the war operated to change the situation of women more directly in another way, and that was in their connection with the war itself. Their most direct connection was through that efficient instrument in preserving the health and keeping up the *morale* of the Union army, — the United States Sanitary Commission.

To understand the importance of the work of this body, we must remember that the army was created from young men who had no previous military training, and was mainly officered by men who had no knowledge of sanitary laws as applied to the conduct of soldiers in barracks or on the field. The medical staff of the sixteen thousand troops in the service before the war was not even sufficient to teach the surgeons necessary for an army of a million. There was the greatest danger that the army would fail of efficiency from lack of attention to sanitary precautions and want of medical and hospital supplies.

Never before had the attempt been made to create an effective fighting force of such magnitude in the same limited time. The mortality from disease was necessarily great, the waste of life by sickness was necessarily enormous, and it would have been still greater but for the constant aid of the Sanitary Commission, and of the women who practically originated it and supported it.

They first moved to supply the necessities of the army in this direction, and to them is due the chief credit for an instrumentality which, it has been estimated, by reducing the mortality of our troops by disease from the usual proportion of four to one in battle or by wounds, to two to one, saved more than one hundred and eighty thousand lives.

The war began on the twelfth of April, 1861, with the attack upon Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor, which surrendered on the thirteenth. Two days after, President Lincoln issued his call for seventy-five thousand troops to serve three months.

The patriotic and benevolent women of the country immediately began to organize. On the seventeenth of April a public meeting to organize a Soldiers' Aid Society was held in Cleveland, Ohio, and on the twenty-ninth, at a meeting of fifty or sixty women informally called in the city of New York, a suggestion was made that the aid societies of the women of the country be organized into a general and central association, and an appeal was addressed to the women of New York and others "already engaged in preparing against the time of wounds and sickness in the army," which resulted in the organization of the "Women's Central Association of Relief" for the sick and wounded of the army.

An associaton was formed about the same time, called "The Advisory Committee of the Boards of Physicians and Surgeons of the Hospitals of New York," and another association, called the "New York Medical Association for furnishing Hospital Supplies in aid of the Army."

On the eighteenth of May the representatives of these three associatons addressed a communication to the Secretary of War, asking for the appointment of a —

"mixed commission of civilians, distinguished for their philanthropic experience and acquaintance with sanitary matters, of medical men, and of military officers, who shall be charged with the duty of investigating the best means of methodizing and reducing to practical service the already active but undirected benevolence of the people toward the army; who shall consider the general subject of the prevention of sickness and suffering among the troops, and suggest the wisest methods which the people at large can use to manifest their good-will towards the comfort, security, and health of the army."

This address stated that the Women's Central Associa-

tion of Relief had selected out of several hundred candidates one hundred women suited in all respects to become nurses in the general hospitals of the army, and that the physicians and surgeons of the hospitals of New York had undertaken to educate and drill these women in a most thorough and laborious manner, and asked that the War Department consent to receive these nurses on wages in such numbers as the exigencies of the war might require.

May 22, 1861, the Acting Surgeon General of the Army recommended that this request be favorably acted upon by the Secretary of War, and suggested the names of persons to be appointed upon the commission.

May 23, 1861, a draft of the powers asked from the government for the commissioners was presented to the Secretary of War. June 9, 1861, the Secretary of War appointed nine persons, including the Acting Surgeon General, with such persons as they might choose to associate with them, "as a commission of inquiry and advice in respect to the sanitary interests of the United States forces," to act without remuneration, and to exist as a commission until the Secretary of War should otherwise direct, or the commission be dissolved by its own motion.

June 13, 1861, this appointment was endorsed: "I approve the above. — A. Lincoln."

The consent of the government to the establishment of this commission was very reluctant, and President Lincoln said he feared it might be the "fifth wheel of the coach;" but within twenty-four hours from the time it was authorized it was actively at work. Its membership was increased first to twenty-one, and subsequently to over five hundred.

It was popularly known as "The Sanitary Commission;" and it is safe to say that without the assistance of the soldiers' aid societies, organized and sustained by the women, it would have been a practical failure.

One of its first acts was to make the Women's Central

Association of Relief at New York an auxiliary branch of the commission, and from time to time the soldiers' aid societies, formed in Chicago, Cincinnati, Buffalo, Cleveland, Louisville, Pittsburg, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities, were made branches of the commission. Each of these had its own auxiliary societies, comprising in all over ten thousand active aid societies. It was from these aid societies, organized and supported by women, that the commission mainly obtained its supplies and the contributions by which it was maintained.

Time permits only a slight allusion to a few of the more important of these aid societies. The Women's Central Association of Relief in New York, and the Brooklyn Relief Association, with an associate membership of one hundred and thirty-eight other smaller societies, collected supplies and contributions to the amount of several million dollars, and so admirable was its organization that its entire expenses for the four years were a little over $61,000.

The Soldiers' Aid Society of Northern Ohio, organized and maintained entirely by women, had one hundred and twenty auxiliary societies, collected and disbursed and distributed in money and in stores $1,133,405.09, and at the close of the war it assumed the support of the Ohio State Soldiers' Home, making to it a gift of $5000 before the Legislature made any appropriation.

The Ladies' Union Aid Society of St. Louis, with but a few auxiliary societies, contributed nearly $200,000 in money, and more than a million dollars in supplies.

The New England Women's Auxiliary Society having for its field only Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts, had in these four States alone one thousand and fifty auxiliary societies, and collected and disbursed nearly $315,000 in money and $1,200,000 in stores and supplies.

The Chicago branch had about a thousand aid societies,

the Cincinnati and Cleveland branches about five hundred, and the Cleveland branch alone handled a business amounting to more than a million dollars, the books of which were well kept by a young woman.

In the then sparsely populated State of Wisconsin, the Soldiers' Aid Society contributed over $200,000, and maintained separate departments for forwarding supplies, for getting State pay for families of soldiers, for securing pensions and arrears of pay, for obtaining employment for wives and mothers of soldiers, for securing work for partially disabled soldiers, and for helping those permanently disabled in service.

All this was done by women, and the variety and extent of the services performed by this society are only an example of the work of all.

It is estimated that the amount of money and of supplies collected and disbursed by these organizations of women during the four years of the war amounted to nearly $54,000,000, and this vast work was done in the most efficient and business-like manner.

In 1868 the Rev. Dr. Bellows, president of the Sanitary Commission, speaking of their work, said, —

"The distinctive features in woman's work in this war were magnitude, system, thorough co-operativeness with the other sex, distinctness of purpose, *business-like thoroughness in details*, sturdy persistency to the close. There was no more general rising among the men than among the women. Men did not take to the musket more commonly than women took to the needle, and for every assembly where men met for mutual excitation in the service of the country, there was some corresponding gathering of women to stir each others' hearts and fingers in the same sacred cause. All the caucuses and political assemblies of every kind, in which speech and song quickened the blood of the men, did not exceed in number the meetings, in the form of soldiers' aid societies and sewing circles which the women held, where they talked over the national cause, and fed the fires of sacrifice in each others' hearts. . . . It is impossible to overestimate the amount of consecrated work done by the loyal women of the North for the army. . . . And their work was as systematic as it was universal. Nothing that men commonly think peculiar to their own methods was wanting in the plans of the women. They acknowledged and

answered, endorsed and filed their letters: they sorted their stores, and kept an accurate account of stock; they had their books and reports kept in the most approved forms; they balanced their cash accounts with the most painstaking precision; they exacted of each other regularity of attendance, and punctiliousness of official etiquette. They showed, in short, a *perfect aptitude for business*, and proved by their own experience that men can devise nothing too precise, too systematic, or too complicated for women to understand, apply, and improve upon, where there is any sufficient motive for it. . . . No words are adequate to describe the systematic, persistent faithfulness of the women who organized and led the branches of the United States Sanitary Commission. Their volunteer labor had all the regularity of paid service, and a heartiness and earnestness which no paid services can ever have. Hundreds of women evinced talents there which, in other spheres and in the other sex, would have made them merchant princes, or great administrators of public affairs. . . . They engaged in a correspondence of the most trying kind, requiring the utmost address to meet the searching questions asked by intelligent jealousy, and to answer the rigorous objections raised by impatience or ignorance in the rural districts. They became instructors of whole townships in the methods of government business, the constitution of the Commissary and Quartermaster's Departments, and the forms of the Medical Bureau."

It should be remembered that the vast sum thus collected and disbursed came in countless contributions, and mainly in small sums from persons of limited means.

In city, town, and hamlet, and in the lonely farmhouses on prairie or on mountain side, the willing fingers of millions of toiling women daily added something to their heavy labors to minister to the necessities of the Union soldiers. Economies were practised, sacrifices were made, privations were endured in countless humble homes, that each might give something to the Union cause.

The public did not at first properly respond to the appeals of the commission for aid. Up to September 1, 1861, it had received in contributions only $13,630.03.

In November, 1861, it had hardly sufficient funds to meet its obligations. In December it received only $19,682.25, ten thousand dollars of which came from New England, and mainly from Boston.

In February, 1862, its members believed that its work

must be abandoned for lack of money; but it struggled on until in September, 1862, after it had lived from hand to mouth for fifteen months, never being able to count with confidence on sixty days of solvency, its total receipts having been only a little over $150,000, the contributions from the women's aid societies began to largely increase.

From that time on, however, the calls upon the commission so increased that during the last six months of 1863 its disbursements were twice as much as its receipts, and it entered on the year 1864 with a balance of less than it had expended during the preceding month of December. It again appealed to the public for funds, saying that if its work was not to be abandoned it must have not less than $250,000 before February 1, 1864. Then it was that the women by their celebrated "sanitary fairs," saved the commission and its work.

The women of Chicago originated and conducted the first of these fairs. Starting out to raise $25,000, they raised and sent to the commission more than $75,000.

The women of Cincinnati at once followed with a fair by which they proposed to raise $250,000, and they did it.

Similar fairs were held in nearly all the other large cities of the North. The sanitary fair of Boston contributed $50,000 in January, 1864, and other and larger contributions followed. Before the summer of 1864, the commission had received more than $1,300,000 from the fairs of Brooklyn and New York alone; more than a million more came from the fair in Philadelphia. The result was that, on June 1, 1864, the commission had a cash balance of over a million dollars with which to continue its great work. It is estimated that nearly five million dollars was raised by these fairs in a little more than twelve months.

The conduct of the women who created them was characterized by the official head of the commission in words which I quote:

"The prodigious exertions put forth by the women who founded and conducted the great fairs for the soldiers in a dozen principal cities and in many large towns, were only surpassed by the *planning, skill, and administrative ability* which accompanied their progress, and the marvellous success in which they terminated. Months of anxious preparation, where hundreds of committees vied with each other in long-headed schemes for securing the co-operation of the several trades or industries allotted to each, and during which laborious days and anxious nights were unintermittingly given to the wearing work, were followed by weeks of personal service in the fairs themselves. . . .

"The chief women who inaugurated the several great fairs at New York, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and administered these vast movements, *were not behind the ablest men in the land in their grasp and comprehension of the business in hand*, and often in comparison with the men associated with them exhibited a finer scope, a better spirit, and a more victorious faith. But for the women of America, the great fairs would never have been born, or would have died ignominiously in their gilded cradles. Their vastness of conception and their splendid results are to be set as an everlasting crown on women's capacity for large and money-yielding enterprises."

Toward the close of the war, the aid of the patriotic women of the North was given to the providing of homes and rests for needy wounded and convalescent soldiers. Homes were thus provided at Columbus, Buffalo, Detroit, Boston, Washington, and other points, and from these came the Soldiers' Homes in the different States where so many otherwise homeless worthy veterans of the war are now maintained in comfort.

It is probably impossible now to give accurate figures as to the number of women who served as hospital and army nurses. But such service began with the first days of the war, and continued to its close.

Within thirty days after the call of the President for seventy-five thousand troops, the Women's Central Association of New York had chosen from hundreds of candidates one hundred competent women to be trained by the physicians and surgeons of New York as nurses in the army hospitals.

And on June 10, 1861, Miss Dorothea Dix was appointed

by the Secretary of War "Superintendent of Female Nurses." She gave herself without compensation earnestly to the selection of competent nurses. Secretary Stanton vested her with sole power to appoint female nurses in the hospitals, and she rented two large houses in Washington, employed two secretaries, established an ambulance service, and travelled by land and by water from point to point in her noble work, and all without compensation and at her own expense. She cheerfully gave her labor and her fortune to the cause. Nurses selected by her and others, who later came to the work in other ways, were found in every general hospital where the sick and wounded were gathered, and by all the red fields from Gettysburg to the Gulf they ministered to the needs of the sick, and wounded, and dying soldiers of the Union army. No words can describe the painful and laborious character of their duties. Many returned to their homes broken in health by exposure and disease, and many others died in their work, and sleep in Southern soil. They fell in the service as much as the soldiers who fell in battle or perished by disease.

Their names are borne on no army roll, and there is no written record of their devoted labors; but so long as a soldier who received their care shall survive, they will live in his memory, as he tells his children and his children's childen of "the sweet saints who blessed the old war time."

The pay of a hospital nurse was $12 a month, but there were many who served without pay, and who left homes of luxury and ease for a service which was more severe than you can well conceive. Where so many served, it is almost invidious to mention any by name; but Miss Clara Barton, who began her work by caring for the wounded Massachusetts soldiers at Baltimore, and who followed the army at Cedar Mountain, Chantilly, Antietam, and Fredericks-

burg, and finally organized the Bureau of Missing Men, by which many a mother or wife or child obtained information as to the fate of father, husband, or brother who perished in field or hospital; Miss Gilson, who was attached to the Transport Service in the swamps of the Chickahominy, and finally succored the wounded and dying in the bloody campaign of the Wilderness and at Fredericksburg; Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Bickerdyke ("Mother Bickerkyke," who labored in hospital and field throughout the war), Mrs. Breckenridge and Mrs. Barlow, Miss Dix, and many others, deserve monuments of enduring bronze as much as Hancock, or Meade, or Sheridan, Sherman, or Grant.

But beyond all this organized work, and deeper than the effect thus produced upon the women of the North, was the effect of the relation which the women as a whole bore to the men of the army.

It should not be forgotten that this army was largely composed of the flower of the young men of the North, nurtured in Christian homes, taught in Christian schools. They came from the farms, the shops, and the professions, and from every walk of industrious and honest life. Each was dear to some family circle to which he looked for cheer and help.

The correspondence between the army and the homes was constant, and marvellous in amount. Some regiments sent a thousand letters a week, and received as many back. Millions of women developed an active interest in the war and its conditions because the men they loved were fighting its battles. They were thus constantly quickened to thought and action. The effect was an awakening from the dormant condition into which woman's life had fallen by more than half a century of peace. Women were called to think and act upon larger matters, and they found they could think and act upon them effectively and well.

"They studied the course of the armies; they watched the policy of the government; they learned the character of the generals; they threw themselves into the war. . . . The army whose bayonets were glittering needles advanced with more unbroken ranks, and exerted almost a greater moral force than the army that carried loaded muskets."

The work women then took up has been enlarged year by year. They have held the occupations into which they then entered, because they have been found competent for them. They have won their way into other occupations, because they have demonstrated their ability to fill them. They are steadily increasing their part in the gainful pursuits of life, because they have demonstrated their capacity to follow them.

It was in the opportunity given them by the war, and in the desire for action which their connection with the events of the war inspired, that their wonderful progress in the last twenty years largely had its origin.

In 1860, women had so small a share in gainful occupations that the United States census took no account of it. But in 1870 they had obtained such a share that it was recognized and stated in detail.

The census of 1880 showed a very large increase in the number of women thus employed, and that of 1890 (the tabulations of which in this respect are not yet complete) will doubtless show a corresponding increase since 1880.

They have become bookkeepers, cashiers, clerks, typewriters, stenographers, telegraph operators, managers, and partners in business.

A single Massachusetts railroad company employs over one hundred in clerical work. The Western Union Telegraph Company now employs two thousand four hundred and sixteen as clerks and operators; and in 1860 it employed few, if any. The telephone offices employ five thousand six hundred and thirty-five women as clerks and operators.

It is estimated that in the offices in the central business

district of New York alone there are from fifteen to twenty thousand women employed as stenographers, typewriters, and in clerical capacities.

More than five thousand women are capable and efficient postmistresses, and the large and important department of the money-order business of the Pittsburg post-office has been wholly in charge of a woman, a thing which would have been deemed impossible before the war.

Women were first employed in the public service in Washington under authorization of law in 1862, at a compensation of $600 per annum, and in the office of the Treasurer of the United States, under General Spinner.

Shortly after the organization of the Internal Revenue Bureau in August, 1862, probably as early as the 1st of January of 1863, and perhaps earlier, a few women were employed in that bureau at a salary of $600 per annum. Subsequently the salaries of women were increased in the appropriation acts to $720 per annum and to $900 per annum; and for a number of years no women were employed at a salary above $900, and that grade was practically monopolized by them, but few men being appointed thereto. In a few instances women were promoted to $1000 and $1200 salaries, and even to higher grades, before the passage of the civil-service law; but these cases were the rare exceptions.

The effect of the civil-service law, however, aided by a gradual change in public sentiment in relation to the employment of women in occupations before monopolized by men, has been to open to women in the public service the higher grades; and at the present time a large number of women have won their way, in competition with men, into the more lucrative and responsible places in that service.

There are now employed in the departments at Washington seven women receiving a salary of $1800 per annum each; about fifty receiving $1500 and $1600; about two

hundred and twenty-five receiving $1400; over six hundred and fifty receiving $1200 and over; about four hundred and forty receiving $1000 and over, but less than $1200; while there are nearly seven hundred receiving $900 and over, but less than $1000.

Of the 17,599 persons employed in the departments of the National government at Washington, 5637 are women. Of these, 1002 are in the Government Printing Office, 1530 in the Department of the Interior, and 1648 in the Treasury Department.

Since promotions in the departments have been made on the basis of efficiency records kept in the departments, and the more or less close competitive tests which have supplemented those records, there has been a decided increase in the proportion of women promoted, which shows that when women in the public service have a fair and even chance with the men, they win their full share of the lucrative and responsible positions.

There is no doubt that the employment of women in the public service has, on the whole, had a beneficial effect upon that service, and has measurably increased its efficiency. No one who was familiar with the conditions obtaining in the departments at Washington twenty-five years ago, and who is familar with the conditions obtaining today, would have any doubt as to the correctness of this statement.

And it is the same in all departments of business. Wherever women have gone they have raised the standard of conduct and increased the efficiency of the service.

In 1889 there were 33 training schools for nurses in the United States, with 1248 pupils, of whom *960 were women*.

And the young women who as trained nurses bring comfort to so many sick in hospitals and homes, and do as much, if not more, than the attending physicians to heal

and to cure, are only the successors of the women whom Dorothea Dix gathered into the corps of female nurses for the Union hospitals.

The more than three thousand women practising medicine in the United States are largely the result of the training of women as nurses in the war.

The woman who served in the army hospital soon came to know that she only needed medical education to practise the art as well as the physicians about her, and she returned determined to seek it.

One competent woman practising medicine soon opened the way for others, and the demand for medical education created schools to give it, and to-day we have a large and increasing number of colleges where women may take degrees in medicine.

The progress made by women in industrial pursuits since the war is strikingly shown by the Massachusetts census reports.

In 1855 the census made no mention of the occupations of women, and in 1865 it gave only a few statistics of little value.

In 1875, women had become so far employed in gainful occupations that full statistics were given, and this was the case in 1885.

In 1889 the Bureau of Statistics published a special report on "Women in Industry," from which it appeared that their increase in gainful occupations from 1875 to 1885 had been most marked as compared with the increase of men in similar occupations.

From 1875 to 1885 the male population increased 17.44 per cent; in industry the males increased 20.30 per cent. During the same period the female population increased 17.69 per cent, *the women in industry increased 64.56 per cent.* The female net excess was one quarter of one per

cent as regards population, and *44.26 per cent* as regards representation in gainful pursuits.

Considering comparative increases, the males in industry increased 1.16 times as fast as the male population; women in industry increased 3.65 times as fast as the female population, and women in industry increased *3.18 times as fast as the males* in industry.

In 1875 there were nineteen branches of industry in which women were not employed; in 1885 there were but eight branches of industry in which women were not employed.

In both 1875 and 1885 there were fifteen branches of industry in which women represented fifty or more per cent of all persons employed therein.

There is no reason to doubt that this increase will continue, and that woman will constantly approach to equality with men in more and more of the gainful pursuits of life.

It is unnecessary to speak in Wellesley of the wonderful progress of women in higher education since the war. The demonstration is before us. But Wellesley College with its thousand graduates is not alone in the field of woman's progress in higher education. The more than three hundred schools and colleges for the higher instruction of women, with their two thousand teachers and thirty thousand scholars; Barnard, Cornell and Radcliffe, and their kindred schools; the medical schools for women, and the nearly four thousand women lawfully practising the profession of medicine; the admission of women to the schools of law and to the legal profession, — are absolute proofs that the future education of women is to be no less thorough than that of men, and that their work in the learned professions is to grow year by year.

More important even than this, however, is the constantly increasing number of women as teachers in our common schools.

In 1892 there were more than thirteen million (13,202,-786) pupils in the common schools of the United States. Of the 374,431 teachers in them, 252,880 were women, and there are doubtless now more than two hundred and fifty-three thousand women daily teaching in the common schools of our country.

There is no single influence in American life more important and more far-reaching in its effect upon the fortunes of the State than this.

That this development can continue and women not come to have a part in the conduct of the government cannot reasonably be expected. Whether an extension of the right of suffrage which is already unduly extended, will be a cure for the ills of the State, may well be doubted.

But it is a grave question how long we can continue to dwell in a "fool's paradise," thinking nothing will happen to disturb the social order because nothing has happened, and not call to the aid of the government the intellectual and moral power of American womanhood.

Note. — The following publications, among others, have been consulted in the preparation of this address:

"Women of the War," Frank Moore, Scranton & Co. Hartford, 1866.

"Women's Work in the Civil War," L. P. Brockett and Mary C. Vaughan; Introduction by Rev. Henry W. Bellows. Zeigler, McCurdy & Co., Boston, 1868.

"History of the United States Sanitary Commission," Charles J. Stilé. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1866.

"United States Sanitary Commission," Catherine Prescott Wormley. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1863.

"Memorial Ceremonies at the Graves of our Soldiers, on May 30th, 1868." Collected under authority of Congress, by Frank Moore. Washington, 1869.

"The National Memorial Day; a Record of Ceremonies over the Graves of Union Soldiers, May 29th, 30th, 1869." E. F. Faehtz, Washington, January, 1870.

"Report of Joint Commission of Senate and House on Status of Laws Organizing Executive Departments, and Information Concerning the Persons Employed Therein. Senate Report, No. 47, October 9th, 1893."

"Official Register of the United States, 1893."

"The National Exposition Souvenir. What America Owes to Women." Edited by Lydia Hoyt Farmer. Charles Wells Moulton, Buffalo, N.Y., 1893.

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